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Letter dated 2 June 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Republic of Lithuania held the presidency of the Security Council for the month of February 2014. I have the honour to transmit herewith an assessment of the work of the Council during the presidency of Lithuania (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Raimonda **Murmokaitė**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 2 June 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Lithuania to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Assessment of the work of the Security Council during the Presidency of Lithuania (February 2014)

Introduction

Under the Presidency of Lithuania, in February 2014 the Security Council held a total of 16 meetings, including 2 open debates, 1 debate, 6 briefings, 10 consultations, 2 private meetings and 1 interactive dialogue.

The Council held an open debate on the effective implementation of protection of civilian mandates in United Nations peacekeeping operations under the item "Protection of civilians in armed conflict". The Council also held a briefing on the cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, with the participation of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Catherine Ashton, which was chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania, Linas Linkevičius. The Council further held an open debate on the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security, also chaired by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania. Two private meetings were also held: on the implementation of the note by the President of the Council of 26 July 2010 on the summary statement of recent practices and newly agreed measures serving as guidance for the work of the Council (S/2010/507) and on the letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136). The members of the Council held an informal interactive dialogue on the Central African Republic with the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union, Smail Chergui, and the Special Representative of the Chair of the African Union Commission and Head of the African-led International Support Mission to the Central African Republic (MISCA), General Jean-Marie Michel Mokoko.

The Council adopted 4 resolutions and 3 presidential statements and issued 11 press statements.

Africa

Burundi

On 13 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2137 (2014), extending the mandate of the United Nations Office in Burundi (BNUB) until 31 December 2014. The Council requested the Secretary-General to prepare the transition of BNUB and the transfer of appropriate responsibilities to the United Nations country team by 31 December 2014. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to establish an electoral observer mission to follow and report on the electoral process in Burundi immediately after the end of the mandate of BNUB. Finally, the Council requested the Secretary-General to report every 90 days on the benchmarks, the implementation of the mandate of BNUB and resolution 2137 (2014), the conditions affecting such implementation and the transition of BNUB to

the United Nations country team, with a written interim report by the end of July 2014 and a final report by 16 January 2015, and to report further every six months until after the elections in 2015.

Central Africa

On 10 and 13 February, the Secretary-General and the Council exchanged letters, through which the mandate of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa was extended until 31 August 2015.

Central African Republic

On 20 February, the Council held a briefing on the situation in the Central African Republic. The Secretary-General briefed the Council. The African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security and the Chargé d'affaires of the Central African Republic to the United Nations, Mesmin Dembassa Worogagoï, also participated in the meeting.

The Secretary-General said that the crisis continued to unfold in the Central African Republic and posed a test for the entire international community. He indicated that the emergency had evolved and become of a greater, more disturbing magnitude. He reported that innocent civilians had been killed on purpose, targeted for their religious beliefs or community affiliations. The Secretary-General stated that more than half the population needed immediate humanitarian assistance and almost 1 million persons had been displaced. He also indicated that the new Head of State of the Transition was committed to building the authority of the State but that her abilities were sharply constrained by a lack of resources and insecurity. The Secretary-General emphasized that the security requirements far exceeded the capabilities of the international troops currently deployed. He also said he would soon report on recommendations for the possible transition to a United Nations peacekeeping mission, but stressed that the deployment, if authorized, would take time. In order to address the greatest risks being faced by the people of the Central African Republic, he proposed a six-point initiative that included additional deployments of troops and police; bringing all international forces under a single coordinated command; the provision of logistical and financial support to the African troops joining this force; tangible support to the Government of the Central African Republic to help it establish a minimum capacity to function; the acceleration of a political and reconciliation process; and urgent funding for humanitarian aid.

The African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security said that preventive efforts to address the situation in the Central African Republic had not succeeded. He stated that, since December, the environment had been marked by extreme violence against civilians, forced displacements and religious hatred that had damaged social cohesion. He confirmed that MISCA had almost reached its authorized strength and that with its reinforcement and the support of French forces, the situation in the capital had improved, the number of security incidents had declined and humanitarian action had been facilitated. He emphasized that international forces had to be more effective and added that MISCA was resolved to meet that challenge and was currently the most suitable option, whose success would open the way for the deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. He also reported that the activities undertaken by MISCA included the

protection of the transitional leaders, the facilitation of humanitarian assistance and, along with Operation Sangaris, the implementation of measures to neutralize anti-balaka militias. He drew attention to the insufficiency of the logistical and communication means of MISCA and urged the Council to favour the establishment of a logistics support module.

The representative of the Central African Republic noted that the presence of MISCA and Operation Sangaris had allowed the country to avoid a descent into chaos. He highlighted the volatile situation in the capital, where a large part of the population was living in camps for the internally displaced and in churches and mosques. He said that other challenges, such as creating a safer security situation, rebuilding State authority and preparing for elections, had to be addressed as a matter of priority. Given current circumstances, he called for the swift deployment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation. He added that a United Nations peacekeeping mission and MISCA would complement each other.

The briefing was followed by an informal interactive dialogue with the African Union Commissioner for Peace and Security and the Special Representative of the Chair of the African Union Commission and Head of MISCA. During the discussion, some members of the Council asked for more detailed explanations of the differing analyses produced by the African Union and the United Nations regarding the security situation on the ground. Some members of the Council welcomed the proposal of the Secretary-General regarding the more immediate needs of the Central African Republic and expressed grave concern about the further deteriorating security and humanitarian situation. They also stressed the need to do more in order to break the cycle of violence in the country.

On 21 February, the Council held closed consultations, during which it was briefed by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Jeffrey Feltman, on the further deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic. He provided additional information on the six-point initiative of the Secretary-General and stated that more troops, police and gendarmerie units were immediately needed. While noting some improvement in Bangui, he said that the security situation in the country remained very bad. He reported that the outlines of the United Nations peacekeeping operation would be presented in the report of the Secretary-General soon to be submitted to the Council.

Members of the Council shared the analysis of the Under-Secretary-General of the dire situation and broadly supported the six-point initiative of the Secretary-General to mobilize further the international community to address the immediate needs of the Central African Republic. Many members generally supported the assessment made by the African Union representatives, while others felt that the situation was worse. Many delegations noted that the proposed initiative was not an alternative to a United Nations peacekeeping operation. While some members of the Council supported the establishment of a United Nations peacekeeping operation, other members preferred to wait for the assessment of what MISCA, Operation Sangaris and the European Union operation had achieved on the ground before deciding on a United Nations peacekeeping operation.

On 21 February, the Council was briefed in consultations by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 2127 (2013) concerning the Central African Republic, Ambassador Raimonda Murmokaitė. She provided an overview of the preparatory work completed since the adoption of the

resolution on 5 December 2013. She also noted that the Committee had held its first formal meeting on 16 January and had adopted its guidelines. The Chair also informed the Council about an "informal informal" meeting on 30 January with countries neighbouring the Central African Republic. During the formal meeting on 6 February, the Committee members had emphasized that further engagement with the countries of the region would be much welcomed. The Chair also informed the Council that the Secretary-General, after consultation with the Committee, had appointed a panel of experts consisting of five members. She further emphasized that the Committee must continue working with a sense of urgency in the light of the grave security and humanitarian situation in the Central African Republic.

Members of the Council expressed their support for the future endeavours of the Chair of the Committee and underlined the importance of regularly engaging with the countries of the region to facilitate their effective implementation of the sanctions regime.

Guinea-Bissau

On 26 February, the Council held a briefing followed by consultations on the situation in Guinea-Bissau. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Guinea-Bissau, José Ramos-Horta, introduced the report of the Secretary-General and reported that the political landscape during the reporting period had been dominated by preparations for the upcoming general elections and the continuing political crisis within the African Party for the Independence of Guinea-Bissau (PAIGC). The Special Representative told the Council that the voter registration process had been concluded and that the funding for polling had been secured through commitments by international partners. Around 95 per cent of eligible voters had been registered. He also reported on the election of the president of PAIGC. By 5 March, all candidatures for presidential elections should be submitted to the Supreme Court. He also reported that, following consultations and requests from political parties, the Transitional President had postponed the elections from 16 March to 13 April 2014. The Special Representative also stressed that there had been no significant progress in the area of human rights protection and the fight against impunity. Restrictions on the right to freedom of expression and assembly remained in force and the social and economic situation in the country was further deteriorating.

A statement was made by the Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, in his capacity as Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, in which he reflected on a recent visit to the country. The Permanent Representative of Mozambique to the United Nations (on behalf of the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries) and the Permanent Representative of Côte d'Ivoire to the United Nations (on behalf of the Economic Community of West African States) also made statements.

Council members welcomed the willingness of Guinea-Bissau to restore the constitutional order but regretted that the election date had been postponed for the third time and emphasized that such delays had a negative impact on the social and economic well-being of the country.

On 26 February 2014, the members of the Council issued a press statement in which they noted that the normalization of the political, security, social and economic situation in Guinea-Bissau was dependent on the return to constitutional

order through, inter alia, credible elections, as well as on reforms, the promotion of socioeconomic development, an improvement in the humanitarian situation and the fight against impunity and drug trafficking. They also noted that the conclusion of the voter registration process was a significant step towards the holding of presidential and legislative elections and they commended the people of Guinea-Bissau for their commitment to exercising their democratic rights in a peaceful manner. The members of the Council encouraged all national stakeholders to maintain the momentum, to work towards timely elections and to renew their commitment to ensuring that the environment in the final weeks would be conducive to the holding of elections. They expressed concern at the continuing delays in the electoral process and emphasized that such delays had a negative impact on the social and economic well-being of the country. The members of the Council condemned the episodes of violence in Guinea-Bissau and urged national stakeholders to refrain from any action that could hamper the electoral process, to facilitate the conduct of peaceful and credible elections and to respect the results of the elections. The members of the Council also recalled their readiness to consider further measures, as necessary, including targeted sanctions against those who undermined efforts to restore the constitutional order. Finally, they expressed support for the leadership of the Special Representative.

Mali

On 26 February, the Council heard a briefing on its mission to Mali, which took place from 1 to 3 February. The overall purpose of the mission, as set out in the terms of reference, was to reiterate the urgent call by the Council for an inclusive and credible negotiation process open to all communities of the north of Mali, with the goal of securing a durable political resolution to the crisis and long-term peace and stability throughout the country. The representatives of Chad and France, as co-leaders of the mission, reported on the meetings and discussions that had been held with high-level officials in Mali, local authorities in the Mopti region, representatives of civil society and representatives of armed groups, who were signatories and adherents to the preliminary agreement to the presidential election and the inclusive peace talks in Mali of 18 June 2013.

Sudan and South Sudan

On 11 February, the Council was briefed in consultations by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Hervé Ladsous, on developments in the relations between South Sudan and the Sudan and the situation in Abyei. He said that relations between South Sudan and the Sudan remained positive. He also said that the Sudan had undertaken a constructively neutral approach to the conflict in South Sudan as part of regional efforts led by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and through its commitment to supporting the cessation-of-hostilities agreement, as well as by offering bilateral support to the Government of South Sudan. The Under-Secretary-General noted, however, that since November 2013 there had been no further progress on demarcating the centre line of the safe demilitarized border zone, nor on the implementation of the other provisions of the agreements of 27 September 2012, except for the resumption of oil production and the sharing of revenues between the north and the south. He stressed that the operations of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism had been suspended by South Sudan pending the demarcation of the centre line. With regard

to Abyei, the Under-Secretary-General said that no progress had been made in implementing the pending aspects of the agreement on temporary security and administrative arrangements for the Abyei area of 20 June 2011, or in regard to the final status of Abyei. The Under-Secretary-General explained that, in addition to the 120-150 Sudanese oil police in Diffra, 660 heavily armed elements of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) and the South Sudan National Police Service (SSNPS) were now present in Abyei, in violation of the temporary agreement. He further informed members of the Council of the armed attack on 3 February by SPLA and SSNPS elements in Abyei against Misseriya and of threats to and denial of access for troops of the United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei (UNISFA). With regard to the conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, the Under-Secretary-General said that hostilities continued unabated and the lack of humanitarian access to some territories remained the biggest problem. He also confirmed the resumption of negotiations on 13 February between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North (SPLM-N) in Addis Ababa, under the auspices of the African Union High-level Implementation Panel on the Sudan, to discuss the peace agreement for the two areas.

A majority of members of the Council welcomed the position of the Sudan regarding the crisis in South Sudan, with some noting that the conflict in South Sudan was a reason for the lack of progress in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. They expressed concern about the humanitarian situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States, while some delegations stressed that it was indispensable to cease hostilities in order to resolve the humanitarian problems. Several members expressed regret that the Government of the Sudan had suspended the operations of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in the country. Some members of the Council stressed the need to continue the constructive dialogue between the Government of the Sudan and ICRC aimed at resolving outstanding issues. Many members welcomed the negotiations led by the African Union High-level Implementation Panel and called for the Governments of the Sudan and South Sudan to implement the agreements on Abyei.

On 14 February, the members of the Council issued a press statement welcoming the resumed negotiations between the Government of the Sudan and SPLM-N in Addis Ababa on 13 February and calling for direct and constructive talks to reach agreement on ending the conflict in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States. The members of the Council reiterated their grave concern about the dire humanitarian situation in South Kordofan and Blue Nile States and called for all parties to expedite safe and unhindered humanitarian access for the timely and full delivery of humanitarian aid, including comprehensive health vaccinations. They also welcomed the increasingly positive bilateral relations between the Sudan and South Sudan and recognized the bilateral support offered by the Government of the Sudan to the Government of South Sudan. The members of the Council conveyed appreciation for the commitment of both Presidents to the implementation of the cooperation agreements of 27 September 2012 and recalled pending aspects of the Agreement between the Government of the Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement on Temporary Security and Administrative Arrangements for the Abyei Area of 20 June 2011, including the redeployment of all Sudanese and South Sudanese forces out of the Abyei area. They particularly deplored the attack on 3 February by SPLA and SSNPS forces in northern Abyei.

On 11 February, the Council was briefed in consultations by the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valerie Amos, and, by video teleconference, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), Hilde Johnson, on the situation in South Sudan.

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations summarized the latest political developments in South Sudan, focusing on violations of the cessation-of-hostilities agreement and the status-of-forces agreement. He noted that the cessation-of-hostilities agreement had been violated by both sides and that the Mine Action Service had reported the use of cluster bombs south of Bor. In that regard, the Under-Secretary-General reiterated the urgent need to restart the operations of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. He commended the mediation efforts led by IGAD and stressed the importance of an inclusive national dialogue and comprehensive political solution to bring the conflict to a close. He condemned the serious and frequent violations of the status-of-forces agreement and the severe and systematic restrictions on the freedom of movement of UNMISS, which had a direct impact on the Mission's ability to implement its mandate. The Under-Secretary-General further provided an update on UNMISS troop deployment.

The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs updated the Council on her trip to South Sudan. She noted that the humanitarian situation was particularly dire, with a huge increase in the number of internally displaced persons and of newly registered refugees from South Sudan in neighbouring countries. She emphasized that almost 3 million people were food insecure. The Under-Secretary-General noted the risks related to the approaching rainy season, which would greatly complicate aid delivery and might exacerbate the risk of diseases. She encouraged the scaling up of the humanitarian response capacity and reiterated the importance of creating safe conditions in the country to enable the safe return of internally displaced persons to their communities.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNMISS explained that hostilities were ongoing and that the security situation had improved but was fragile. She reported that UNMISS had increased patrols outside its bases, including to more fragile sites. The Special Representative noted that fear and the insecure environment prevented many internally displaced persons from leaving the UNMISS bases. She recalled that the priorities for UNMISS remained the protection of civilians, the monitoring of human rights and the facilitation of humanitarian access. She said that UNMISS would deliver an interim update on the human rights situation to the Council in February and produce a comprehensive report on human rights for the Council in April. She further expressed concern over the deterioration in relations with the Government of South Sudan, violations of the status-of-forces agreement and threats against UNMISS.

Members of the Council unanimously expressed concern about the ongoing violations of the status-of-forces agreement, including restrictions and threats against UNMISS and humanitarian personnel. They called for strict adherence to the agreement and for the perpetrators of such illegal acts to be brought to justice. They welcomed the efforts led by IGAD, but were concerned about the ongoing violations of the cessation-of-hostilities agreement and the slow implementation of the Joint

Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. The Council was unanimous in expressing grave concern about the humanitarian and human rights situation in South Sudan.

On 13 February, the members of the Council issued a press statement, in which they welcomed the political talks between South Sudanese leaders, expressing their strong support for the IGAD mediation and the African Union efforts to address the situation in South Sudan. They stressed that political dialogue would succeed only if it was fully inclusive and condemned the violations of the cessation-of-hostilities agreement. They urged the establishment by IGAD of a joint technical committee and the immediate deployment of the Joint Border Verification and Monitoring Mechanism. The members of the Council called for the redeployment and/or progressive withdrawal of allied forces invited by either side and warned of the serious consequences of a regionalization of the conflict. The members of the Council strongly condemned the widespread violations of human rights and international humanitarian law. They reiterated their steadfast support for UNMISS and condemned in the strongest terms all actions by government and opposition forces that obstructed or impeded the work of UNMISS and threatened its personnel. They condemned the violations of the status-of-forces agreement and renewed their call to the Government of South Sudan to accept immediately additional troops without conditions. The members of the Council also affirmed the importance of human rights monitoring, investigation and reporting, and welcomed the next steps towards the formation of an African Union commission of inquiry.

On 20 February, in consultations under "Other matters", the President of the Council informed members of the outcome of her meeting with the Permanent Representative of South Sudan held at the request of the Council. She said that the Presidency had conveyed the concerns of the Council regarding statements made against the United Nations by the President of South Sudan and other senior officials, the importance of observing the cessation-of-hostilities agreement and of the full cooperation by the Government of South Sudan with IGAD monitoring and verification efforts. The Presidency also expressed the concern of the Council over reports alleging the indiscriminate use of cluster munitions by parties in the conflict. She informed the members of the Council of the feedback she had received from the Permanent Representative of South Sudan, who had stressed that the majority of the concerns of the Council were fully shared by the Government of South Sudan.

On 11 February, the Council was briefed in consultations by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1591 (2005) concerning the Sudan, Ambassador Maria Cristina Perceval, on the work of the Committee during the period from 20 November 2013 sto 11 February 2014. The Chair referred to her recent visit to Khartoum and Darfur and her meetings with various interlocutors. She reported on the presentation made by the Panel of Experts on the Sudan on its final report and noted that, during the discussions held by the Committee, many members had expressed concern at the deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the Darfur region. Some members of the Council described the report as credible, comprehensive and fact-based, while others said that the report was not balanced. Some members of the Council deplored the routine violations of the arms embargo, the aerial bombardments and the violations of the end-user certificates by the Government of the Sudan. Some Council members also voiced concern over violations of the travel ban and the asset freeze. Several members expressed support for some or all of the recommendations in the report.

On 13 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2138 (2014), extending the mandate of the Panel of Experts for a period of 13 months. In the resolution, the Council requested the Panel of Experts to provide updates every three months to the Committee regarding its activities. With regard to the arms embargo, the Council, inter alia, called upon the Government of the Sudan to address the illicit transfer, destabilizing accumulation and misuse of small arms and light weapons in Darfur.

Somalia

On 13, 21 and 27 February respectively, the members of the Council issued three press statements condemning terrorist attacks in Somalia, which had caused numerous deaths and injuries and for which Al-Shabaab had claimed responsibility. Council members reaffirmed their determination to support the peace and reconciliation process in Somalia. They also underlined their support to the President and the Federal Government of Somalia and to all those working to bring a better future to the people of Somalia. The members of the Council underscored their determination to continue to support all international efforts aimed at ending the threat posed by Al-Shabaab.

Middle East

Lebanon

On 1 February, the members of the Council issued a press statement, in which they strongly condemned the terrorist attack on 1 February in Hermel, which killed at least four people and injured dozens. On 19 February, they issued a press statement strongly condemning the terrorist attacks on the Bir El Hassan neighbourhood in the vicinity of an Iranian cultural centre in Beirut, which killed at least 8 people and wounded more than 100. They reiterated that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. They reaffirmed the need to combat, by all means, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and all obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law. The members of the Council underlined the need to bring the perpetrators to justice. They also appealed to all Lebanese people to preserve national unity in the face of attempts to undermine the stability of the country and stressed the importance for all Lebanese parties to respect the policy of disassociation and to refrain from any involvement in the Syrian crisis, consistent with their commitment in the Baabda Declaration.

On 15 February, the members of the Council issued a press statement, in which they welcomed the formation of a new Government in Lebanon. The members of the Council looked forward to the constructive engagement of that Government with the international community, in particular the International Support Group for Lebanon, to mobilize support. They stressed that effective implementation of the relevant Council resolutions remained crucial to ensuring stability in Lebanon. They underlined the need for the Government to uphold the long-standing democratic tradition of Lebanon, in particular in ensuring that presidential elections would take place within the constitutional framework.

The situation in the Middle East (Syrian Arab Republic)

On 5 February, the Council was briefed in informal consultations by the Special Coordinator of the Joint Mission of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons and the United Nations for the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons Programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, Sigrid Kaag, on the implementation of the decision of the Executive Council of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) on the destruction of Syrian chemical weapons and resolution 2118 (2013). The Special Coordinator informed the Council that the Joint Mission continued its engagement with the Syrian Arab Republic and Member States with the aim of establishing continuity of movements to rid the country of those materials as quickly and safely as possible, in accordance with OPCW Executive Council decisions and resolution 2118 (2013). She said that on 27 January 2014 the Syrian Arab Republic had transported an additional consignment of containers with key binary chemical weapons components and other chemicals from their storage sites to the port of Latakia, with verification conducted remotely by the Joint Mission. The containers had been loaded onto cargo vessels for onward transportation. She also confirmed that the tripartite status-of-mission agreement of the United Nations and OPCW with the Syrian Arab Republic had been signed on 5 February 2014. She reiterated that the complex security environment continued to present challenges to the overall effort to eliminate the chemical weapons programme of the Syrian Arab Republic, including the verification activities of the Joint Mission. On the other hand, the Special Coordinator acknowledged that the intermediate timelines set by the OPCW Executive Council for the removal of the most critical chemical weapons material for destruction outside the country had not been met and the Syrian Arab Republic was at a critical juncture with regard to the elimination of its chemical weapons programme. While echoing the view of the Secretary-General that the delay was not insurmountable, the Special Coordinator emphasized that consistent, predictable movements of sufficient volume were essential and in-country movements of chemical weapons material had to be expedited if the Syrian Arab Republic was to meet the completion dates set by the Security Council and the OPCW Executive Council. She also stressed that the Syrian authorities had sufficient material and equipment to carry out multiple ground movements without further delay. The Special Coordinator further presented the work of the Joint Mission with the United Nations Environment Programme and the World Health Organization to assess environmental and public health risks and provide timely advice on appropriate mitigation measures. Finally, she underlined that continued unity of purpose among the international community was critical to fulfilling the conditions of resolution 2118 (2013).

Members of the Council unanimously expressed appreciation to the Joint Mission and its personnel for their commitment in a dangerous conflict environment. They also emphasized the importance of ensuring the safety of the Joint Mission and its staff. Some members regretted that the interim timelines for the removal of the chemical weapons materials had not been met and called for the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to ensure a consistent and systematic flow of movements, as well as an increased volume of chemical materials transported. Some members of the Council also noted that the Syrian authorities should present a clear sequencing plan on meeting their obligations related to the transport of chemical weapons. Some members also pointed out that the Syrian authorities had

sufficient equipment to carry out multiple ground movements. Some members underlined the extent of the assistance provided for the Joint Mission by the international community and voiced concern over the additional costs caused by delays. Some members noted the progress made to date in the removal of chemical weapons from the Syrian Arab Republic and the effect of the volatile security situation on the implementation of the mission. Some countries reiterated concern over the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

In a text to the press read out by the President of the Council following the consultations, members of the Council, inter alia, noted the removal of limited quantities of chemical weapons materials from the territory of the Syrian Arab Republic on 7 and 27 January 2014, acknowledged the activities of the Syrian Arab Republic related to the destruction of chemical weapons and facilities for the production of such weapons, noted that concern about the slow pace of the removal, which had placed efforts behind schedule, had grown, called upon the Syrian Arab Republic to expedite transport in a systematic and sufficiently accelerated manner of all relevant chemicals, emphasized that it was the ultimate responsibility of the Syrian Arab Republic to ensure the removal of its chemical weapons and the elimination of its chemical weapons programme in a timely and safe manner, and committed itself to continuing to monitor compliance with resolution 2118 (2013) closely, with less than five months to go until 30 June 2014, when the destruction of the weapons was due to be completed, which was a deadline that Council members remained committed to seeing met.

On 13 February, the Council received an update in consultations on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator. The Under-Secretary-General said that since the Council had adopted its presidential statement of 2 October 2013 (S/PRST/2013/15), the conflict had intensified, with reports of systematic targeting of communities with specific religious affiliations, the use of siege as a weapon of war and the deliberate denial of humanitarian assistance to people in need. She said that the violence was not abating, with reports of indiscriminate attacks and the use of heavy weaponry, aerial bombings, mortars and car bombs in populated areas. The Under-Secretary-General said that civilian institutions were being attacked or used as military installations. She emphasized that the operational environment for humanitarian relief personnel was more dangerous than ever and noted consistent and flagrant violations of international humanitarian law and the failure to protect civilians. She concluded that the presidential statement had not delivered as expected and urged the Council to take the action necessary to uphold the principles and values of the United Nations.

Some members of the Council expressed grave concern regarding the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and voiced their appreciation to the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for its role in humanitarian operations in the country. Some members noted the efforts to alleviate the humanitarian situation and condemned the terrorist attacks in the country. Some members, in the light of the deteriorating humanitarian situation, expressed the view that the Council should adopt a resolution addressing the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic.

On 22 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2139 (2014), by which it demanded that all parties immediately put an end to all forms of violence

and cease all attacks against civilians and the indiscriminate employment of weapons in populated areas, and called upon all parties to immediately lift sieges of populated areas. The Council also demanded that all parties, in particular the Syrian authorities, promptly allow rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for United Nations humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners, including across conflict lines and across borders. The Council requested the Secretary-General to report to it on the implementation of the resolution by all parties in the Syrian Arab Republic within 30 days of its adoption and every 30 days thereafter, and, upon receipt of the report of the Secretary-General, the Council expressed its intention of taking further steps in the case of non-compliance with this resolution.

In a statement after the vote, the Secretary-General very much welcomed the adoption of the resolution and stated that if it was implemented quickly and in good faith, at least some of the suffering could be eased. He stated that, while the political process continued, the United Nations would continue to do all it could to provide relief and protection to people in need on the ground.

Members of the Security Council welcomed the adoption of the resolution on the humanitarian situation in the Syrian Arab Republic and called upon the parties to implement it fully. Some Council members highlighted the intention of the Council to take further steps in case of non-compliance with the resolution.

In a statement after the vote, the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic stated that the Government was ready to cooperate with the United Nations on humanitarian issues, respecting the sovereignty of the Syrian Arab Republic, and stressed that the steps that had been taken to implement the presidential statement of 2 October 2013 would not have been possible without the cooperation of the Government.

The situation in the Middle East, including the Palestinian question

On 25 February, the Council held its monthly meeting on the Middle East, including the Palestinian question. The Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs briefed the Council at a public meeting. The briefing was followed by consultations.

The Under-Secretary-General said that a defining moment was nearing in the Middle East peace process, as the work done by the Secretary of State of the United States of America, John F. Kerry, to address Israeli and Palestinian aspirations and concerns had opened a credible political horizon for achieving the two-State solution. He also emphasized that it was time for national constituencies to put their agendas behind the peace agenda. For Palestinians, a negotiated peace settlement held the promise of Palestine becoming a fully recognized Member State of equal standing. For Israel too there were benefits: only a negotiated two-State solution would bring it the security and recognition it deserved. The Under-Secretary-General noted, however, that the situation on the ground remained fragile. Clashes had increased in and around Palestinian refugee camps and instances of attacks by settlers on Palestinian property had occurred. Israeli security forces had reported having foiled several terrorist attacks. During the reporting period, the Government of Israel increased funding and incentives for existing settlements. Visits by Israeli groups, including senior officials, to the Temple Mount/Haram al-Sharif had resulted in a confrontation between Palestinians and the Israeli police accompanying those groups. The Under-Secretary-General expressed deep concern about the

ongoing demolition of Palestinian residential and livelihood structures in Area C, particularly in the Jordan Valley and East Jerusalem. The reports of impeded access for the humanitarian community in the delivery of emergency shelter and other assistance were also worrying. He said that ICRC had decided to suspend its distribution of tents to people affected by house demolitions in the Jordan Valley after noting a pattern of obstruction and confiscation of these items by the Israeli authorities.

Turning to Gaza, the Under-Secretary-General said that there were troubling signs that the ceasefire understanding of November 2012 was eroding, both with regard to the end of hostilities and the opening of the crossing for people and goods. He was deeply concerned about the rise in violence and called on all parties to act in accordance with international law. He noted that, owing to the ongoing closure of Gaza, the humanitarian situation had continued to deteriorate. He also said that Fatah and Hamas delegations had met in Gaza to discuss the implementation of existing reconciliation agreements. Finally, the Under-Secretary-General stressed that only the reunification of Gaza and the West Bank under the legitimate Palestinian Authority based on the commitments made by the Palestine Liberation Organization could pave the way to a durable solution for Gaza as part of political progress towards peace.

With respect to the Syrian Arab Republic, the Under-Secretary-General noted the holding of the Geneva II conference and the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014) regarding the humanitarian situation in the country. He stressed that the death toll and destruction in the Syrian Arab Republic and in the region continued to mount tragically, pointing urgently to the need for a political solution. He pointed out that progress in the Geneva II talks had so far been limited. The Under-Secretary-General also pointed out that the Secretary-General had welcomed the adoption of resolution 2139 (2014) and hoped that it would allow all humanitarian actors on the ground to increase significantly their reach to all those in need. He stressed that the ongoing hostilities in the Syrian Arab Republic also continued to have an impact on the vulnerable community of Palestine refugees. The situation was deteriorating in Yarmouk, where 16,000 Palestine refugees remained trapped.

The Under-Secretary-General said that in Lebanon the formation of the Government of "national interest" was a major positive development against a backdrop of continued tensions stemming from deadly terrorist attacks, as well as incidents of shelling and shooting from across the Syrian border. He noted that the inclusion of most political parties in the cabinet was important for addressing the serious security threats and humanitarian challenges facing the country, as was the organizing of presidential elections on time in the following month. He reported that the situation in the area of operations of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon and along the Blue Line remained calm, despite almost daily Israeli violations of Lebanese airspace.

Following the briefing, the Council held consultations of the whole. Members of the Council expressed support for the efforts of the United States Secretary of State. Some members expressed concern about the negative impact that recent incidents and public interventions in the media by the representatives of both parties might have on the peace process. Some members called on Israel to halt settlement activities, lift restrictions on the Gaza Strip and stop the demolition of Palestinian structures. Some members stressed that the rocket fire from the Gaza Strip to Israel

must be stopped. Members of the Council welcomed the unanimous adoption of resolution 2139 (2014) and urged the parties to the conflict to implement it without delay. Most members stressed the particular responsibility of the Syrian authorities in that regard. Most members reiterated the readiness of the Council to take further steps in case of non-compliance, as provided for in the resolution on the basis of information contained in the first report by the Secretary-General. The members of the Council reiterated that the only way to end the Syrian crisis was to reach a political solution. Most members expressed the hope that the parties to the conflict would resume talks. Some members expressed the hope that the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic would accept the agenda proposed by the Joint Special Representative of the United Nations and the League of Arab States for Syria, Lakhdar Brahimi. Most members of the Council stressed the need for progress on the political, chemical weapons and humanitarian tracks of the Syrian crisis. Members of the Council welcomed the formation of the Government in Lebanon. Most members stated that the deteriorating security situation was threatening the region, owing to the spillover of the Syrian conflict, and condemned the terrorist acts committed in Lebanon. Most members noted that Lebanon was facing security, humanitarian and refugee challenges and that the international community had to continue to support its national unity. Several members expressed the hope that the presidential elections would be held in a timely manner. Some members appreciated the initiative of the International Support Group for Lebanon.

Yemen

On 26 February, the Council unanimously adopted resolution 2140 (2014) on Yemen, by which it welcomed the outcome of the comprehensive National Dialogue Conference, expressed strong support for completing the next steps of the transition, including the drafting of a new constitution, and for holding a referendum on the draft constitution and timely general elections. The Council also established a committee to monitor, inter alia, the implementation of the freeze of financial assets and the travel ban on individuals or entities designated by the Committee. Following the adoption of the resolution, some Members of the Council expressed support for a political transition in Yemen, encouraged a move towards a peaceful transition and reiterated the importance of the sanctions mechanism in countering those who tried to derail the process.

Europe

Cyprus

On 11 February, the members of the Council issued a press statement, welcoming the joint communiqué agreed by the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, and commended them for demonstrating political leadership. Members of the Council were encouraged by the commitment to resume structured negotiations in a results-oriented manner and to discuss all unresolved core issues independently, and called on the parties to continue in a spirit of good faith to reach a solution as soon as possible. The members of the Council expressed the hope that the leaders would use that opportunity to reach a comprehensive settlement based on a bicommunal, bizonal federation with political equality, as set out in the relevant resolutions of the Council. They reiterated their full support for the process and underlined the benefits that reunification would bring. They also expressed deep

appreciation to the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Cyprus for his perseverance and commitment and looked forward to the continued role of the good offices mission in Cyprus.

Cooperation between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations (European Union)

On 14 February, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy briefed the Council on cooperation between the United Nations and the European Union in maintaining international peace and security. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania presided the briefing. The High Representative reiterated the strong commitment of the European Union to supporting and working for effective multilateralism, with the United Nations at its core. She provided an overview of the contribution of the European Union to international negotiations and responses to crises, such as its leadership on the issue of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran and work on the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina. She also mentioned the efforts of the European Union to support stability, security and development in Somalia, its willingness to help in Mali and the countries of the wider Sahel-Sahara region, and pledged that it would play its part in helping the Central African Republic. The High Representative also addressed the situations in the Syrian Arab Republic, the Middle East, Ukraine and Egypt.

The Secretary-General underlined the importance of establishing stronger partnerships with regional organizations and their critical role in maintaining international peace and security, including in conflict prevention, mediation, crisis management, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. He emphasized the significant contribution of the European Union to the United Nations and the increasing work done by the two entities side-by-side on the ground in peacekeeping, civilian crisis management operations and preventive diplomacy. The Secretary-General underlined the deeply concerning situation in the Central African Republic, the importance of the establishment of MISCA and other current and forthcoming military contributions. He underscored his commitment to preventing further atrocities and to presenting the Council with recommendations for ending the crisis.

Members of the Council underscored the importance of the cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations and noted the complementary role of the European Union in maintaining international peace and security. Some members acknowledged that the European Union had made a valuable contribution in the areas of conflict prevention, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, combating terrorism, the rule of law, promotion of human rights, protection of civilians, humanitarian response, reconstruction and development. Some members also acknowledged the importance of the cooperation with other regional and subregional organizations, in particular the African Union. Some members of the Council emphasized the facilitating role played by the European Union in seeking solutions to the Iranian nuclear issue and issues between Belgrade and Pristina, as well as its support to the international efforts in the Central African Republic and the Sahel region. Referring to the Syrian case, one member of the Council noted that unilateral sanctions were largely eroding the positive effect of European Union humanitarian assistance.

On 14 February, the Council adopted a presidential statement commending the significant contribution of the European Union in supporting the maintenance of international peace and security (S/PRST/2014/4). The Council also commended the involvement of the European Union in international negotiations and mediation, in particular its coordinating role in reaching an agreement between the European Union three plus three — France, Germany and the United Kingdom plus China, the Russian Federation and the United States — and the Islamic Republic of Iran on a joint plan of action and its significant contribution to the economic development and stabilization of the western Balkans.

The Council welcomed the comprehensive approach of the European Union to the maintenance of international peace and security and commended its commitment to combating piracy off the coast of Somalia and its contribution to the stabilization of that country. The Council also welcomed its strong engagement in the Central African Republic and its decision to establish a temporary operation to support MISCA, as well as its support for the objectives and missions of the United Nations in Mali and the Sahel region. The Council reiterated the shared objectives of both organizations in promoting and facilitating a political solution to the Syrian conflict, based on full implementation of the Geneva communiqué, and noted the commitment of the European Union to a just, lasting and comprehensive peace in the Middle East and in promoting security, good governance and development in Afghanistan.

The Council welcomed the ongoing cooperation in strengthening the response of the United Nations in promoting development cooperation and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Council also recognized the valuable support of the European Union in the protection of civilians in armed conflicts and underlined the critical role of women in peace and security efforts. The Council also emphasized that the European Union could contribute to accountability through cooperation with international mechanisms, courts and tribunals, including the International Criminal Court.

Finally, the Council encouraged both organizations to further strengthen their institutional relations and strategic partnership, including through regular briefings to the Council.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

On 24 February, the Council held a briefing on the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) with the President and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland and current Chairperson-in-Office of OSCE, Didier Burkhalter, who noted the OSCE contribution to the efforts of the United Nations as a regional organization under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations to maintain or re-establish peace, security and stability at the international level, in particular the work undertaken by both organizations in Afghanistan and Georgia, as well as in Kosovo. The Chairperson-in-Office stated that the OSCE agenda had been dominated by the political crisis and recent escalation of violence in Ukraine and spoke of the calls he had made to all sides to refrain from violence, resolve the crisis through dialogue and political means and respect human rights. He noted the importance of the agreement reached on 21 February to ending the violence and providing a political solution to the crisis. He also informed the Council of his proposal to establish an international contact

group on Ukraine and the appointment of his personal envoy on Ukraine. He encouraged the new leaders of Ukraine to invite the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) to the country to establish the facts and circumstances of the incidents that had taken place and he also called for the issuance of an early invitation for an ODIHR election observation mission. The Chairperson-in-Office noted that during its chairmanship Switzerland would aim to foster security and stability through engagement in the western Balkans, the southern Caucasus and Transnistria; improve people's lives through reinforcing cooperation between regional and global organizations in promoting and protecting human rights, democracy and the rule of law; and strengthen the capacity of OSCE to act through reinforcing its mediation capacities and enhancing the dialogue with civil society.

Members of the Council welcomed the comprehensive approach to security of OSCE, supported the priorities across all three OSCE dimensions of the Swiss chairmanship, including encouraging respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and called for strengthened cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE. Members of the Council who addressed the situation in Ukraine expressed support for a political solution and ending the violence. The principles of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine, as well as the rights of national minorities, were also emphasized. Two members noted the importance of implementing the agreement of 21 February between the Government and the opposition for the stabilization of the country. Some countries stressed the importance for OSCE to make additional efforts in addressing transnational threats, adopting a more reliable approach to the management of natural resources, strengthening its mediation efforts, promoting dialogue and confidence-building measures and assisting participating States in implementing the OSCE principles and commitments.

Security Council resolutions 1160 (1998), 1199 (1998), 1203 (1998), 1239 (1999) and 1244 (1999)

On 10 February, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, Farid Zarif, briefed the Council in a videoconference. The Prime Minister of Serbia, Ivica Dačić, and Hashim Thaçi of Kosovo also addressed the Council.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General took note of the remarkable progress achieved in the previous year, particularly through the First Agreement of Principles Governing the Normalization of Relations on 19 April 2013, which was facilitated by the High Representative of the European Union. He noted that implementation of the terms agreed regarding the judiciary in northern Kosovo had not been completed and emphasized that building confidence in the police and judiciary throughout Kosovo was of the highest importance. The Special Representative emphasized that despite successful local elections, the pace of establishing the new administrations in municipalities in northern Kosovo was slow. He called on international and local stakeholders to support the new municipal administrations and stressed that the establishment of a community/association of municipalities with Serb majorities would represent another major step in the full implementation of the 19 April Agreement. The Special Representative noted that prevailing concerns among the local public in the north should be met by visible progress in improving local infrastructure, services and law enforcement. He also

mentioned a debate that had taken place within Kosovo on the participation of local residents in conflicts in other regions or countries, such as the Syrian Arab Republic, and that the Kosovo authorities had proposed a draft law that would prohibit and criminalize the participation of Kosovars in armed conflicts abroad. He also noted that some progress had been made in the clarification of the fate of missing persons. The Special Representative reported that the Council of the European Union had opened the negotiations for a stabilization and association agreement with Kosovo and accession negotiations with Serbia. He also stated that Belgrade and Pristina needed to consolidate the progress achieved to date and overcome outstanding issues through dialogue.

Mr. Dačić gave an assessment of the situation of the rights of minority communities in Kosovo and Metohija, in particular in preparations for the forthcoming parliamentary elections. He emphasized that it was necessary to achieve a fundamental agreement on the long-term representation of the Serbian community in the central institutions of Kosovo. Mr. Dačić pointed out that any discussion of a possible change in the scope and mandate of the European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo (EULEX) must not take place outside the Council. He expressed the readiness of Serbia for normalization and reconciliation in the region and a dialogue aimed at finding a comprehensive solution.

Mr. Thaçi emphasized that the primary goal of his Government was integration with the European Union and that political stability had had a positive impact on the economy. He noted the resolution of the European Parliament welcoming the progress in building Kosovo for all citizens regardless of their ethnicity or faith and the decisions of the International Federation of Association Football and the International Handball Federation to allow Kosovo to participate in international sporting tournaments. He also stressed the continuous engagement in creating the conditions necessary for the return of internally displaced persons. Mr. Thaçi expressed a commitment to continuing the dialogue with Serbia in 2014 with a view to further implementation of the 19 April Agreement that should serve as a model for solving regional disputes.

The members of the Council supported and encouraged further implementation of the 19 April Agreement. Some members welcomed the conduct of local elections and commended the coordination between EULEX, OSCE and the Kosovo Force (KFOR) in securing the electoral process throughout Kosovo. Some members highlighted the positive role of EULEX in strengthening the rule of law in Kosovo. Some members also highlighted the issue of organ trafficking and said they would closely monitor the progress of the relevant investigation. Some members of the Council expressed concern over the issue of internally displaced persons and encouraged Governments to ensure the necessary conditions for their return. Some members underscored the appreciation of the growing number of countries that had recognized the independence of Kosovo and urged other States to do so. Some members emphasized that resolution 1244 (1999) was the legal basis for resolving the question of Kosovo and that efforts to resolve the issue should be carried out within the framework of the resolution. One member stated that only the Security Council had the authority to take decisions on the issue of the status of Kosovo. Some members of the Council suggested reducing the number of reports and the frequency of Council meetings in relation to the situation in Kosovo.

Letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136)

On 28 February, the Council held a private meeting in relation to the letter dated 28 February 2014 from the Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136).

The Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, Oscar Fernández-Taranco, provided an overview on the developments in Ukraine since November 2013 and informed the Council about the efforts of the Secretary-General to promote a dialogue aimed at a peaceful resolution of the crisis in Ukraine, including by sending an envoy to Ukraine on a fact-finding mission. The Assistant Secretary-General reiterated the appeal of the Secretary-General for an inclusive political process in Ukraine that reflected the aspirations of all Ukrainians and preserved the unity and territorial integrity of Ukraine and expressed the solidarity of the United Nations with the citizens of Ukraine in difficult circumstances.

The Permanent Representative of Ukraine requested the Council to consider his letter of 28 February addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/136) and the situation in relation to Ukraine.

On 28 February, in consultations, many members of the Council reviewed with concern the recent developments in Ukraine, including Crimea; voiced their support for Ukrainian unity, territorial integrity and sovereignty; agreed on the importance of restraint on the part of all the political actors in Ukraine; and called for an inclusive political dialogue acknowledging the diversity of Ukrainian society. One member noted the breach of the agreement of 21 February, which it said had led to the deterioration of the situation and called for its implementation.

Thematic issues and other matters

Terrorist attack in Egypt

On 16 February, the members of the Council issued a press statement, in which they condemned in the strongest terms the terrorist attack on 16 February targeting a bus carrying tourists from the Republic of Korea in the Sinai Peninsula, Egypt, killing at least four people and injuring dozens. The members of the Council extended their condolences to the families of the victims and expressed their sympathy to all those injured and to the people and Governments of Egypt and the Republic of Korea. They reaffirmed that terrorism in all its forms and manifestations constituted one of the most serious threats to international peace and security. The members of the Council also reaffirmed the need to combat by all means threats to international peace and security caused by terrorist acts, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and all obligations under international law, in particular international human rights, refugee and humanitarian law. The members of the Council underlined the need to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Non-proliferation (Democratic People's Republic of Korea)

On 20 February, the Council was briefed in consultations by the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1718 (2006),

Ambassador Sylvie Lucas, on the work of the Committee during the period from 11 November 2013 to 19 February 2014.

The Chair stated that during the reporting period the Committee had held two informal meetings and performed its duties through the "no objection" procedure. She noted that the Panel of Experts had submitted to the Committee two incident reports. During the informal meeting of 20 December, the Committee had discussed three incident reports and, on 24 January 2014, it had discussed the incident report of the Panel on the arms shipment carried by the *Chong Chon Gang* seized by Panama in July 2013. She also reported that the Committee had continued to review and improve the consolidated list of individuals and entities subject to an asset freeze and travel ban and the lists of prohibited items and that in January 2014 additional information had been included in the listing for an entity on the consolidated list. The Chair reported that on 18 November 2013 the Chair of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) and 1989 (2011) concerning Al-Qaida and associated individuals and entities, together with the Chairs of the Committees established respectively by resolutions 1988 (2011), 1373 (2001) concerning Counter-Terrorism, 1718 (2006), 1737 (2006) and 1540 (2004), jointly organized an open briefing on the roles of the Council and the Financial Action Task Force in combating the financing of terrorism and proliferation, with the participation of the President of the Task Force. She also voiced the intention of the Committee to continue this exercise of transparency and outreach to the wider United Nations membership by holding one or more such open briefings in 2014. The Chair also reported that the Committee was currently considering the final report of the Panel of Experts. Finally, she noted that during the reporting period the Committee had received four implementation reports from Member States and that the number of States that had reported on implementation stood at 97.

Following the introduction of the report, several members shared their initial observations about the final report and described it as strong and detailed and its recommendations as reasonable. They also urged that the final report be made publicly available soon. Other members noted that they were studying the report and looking forward to holding constructive discussions.

Several members of the Committee commended the Panel of Experts for its comprehensive report on the *Chong Chon Gang* incident, which they considered to be of excellent quality, and underscored the need for a timely and effective response. Some members of the Council stated that a clear violation of sanctions had occurred in this case and put forward a number of concrete proposals for action by the Committee at a minimum, notably the issuance of an implementation assistance notice on the case, the designation of additional entities, including shipping entities involved in the violation, and publishing the incident report in an effort to assist Member States and to demonstrate transparency. Members of the Committee stated that their capitals were still examining the report and stressed that any follow-up by the Committee, including discussions on the issue of publication of the report, could only be considered once the Panel of Experts had concluded its follow-up investigation. One member of the Committee expressed doubts about some of the data contained in the report and expressed the view that the experts had not acted in accordance with agreed procedures.

Some members of the Council welcomed recent developments on the Korean peninsula aimed at decreasing tension, such as the high-level talks between the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and family reunions. Some members expressed the hope that all parties concerned would maintain a holistic approach and take practical steps to create favourable conditions to resume the Six-Party Talks so as to bring the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea back to a sustainable, irreversible, effective track of dialogue. Some members expressed concern that there were no indications that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea was willing to abandon its nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programmes. They also noted with concern the indications that the nuclear reactor at Yongbyon would be restarted. A number of members also expressed deep alarm at the findings of the commission of inquiry on human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of the Human Rights Council, emphasizing that they deserved further attention. The need to address differences in human rights through constructive dialogue and cooperation on the basis of equality and mutual respect was also mentioned.

Protection of civilians in armed conflict

On 12 February, the Council held an open debate and adopted a presidential statement on the protection of civilians in armed conflict (S/PRST/2014/3). Briefings were given by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navanethem Pillay, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations and the Director General of ICRC, Yves Daccord. In addition to members of the Council, under rules 37 and 39 of the the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, 48 non-members of the Council, including Estonia at the ministerial level, took part in the open debate.

The High Commissioner emphasized the importance of human rights components in peacekeeping operations and that timely and well-resourced human rights monitoring, advocacy and reporting were essential for the effective implementation of protection mandates. She also stressed the importance of a clear understanding of the concept of "protection of civilians" in peacekeeping and its linkage to human rights mandates. She noted the need for support from the Council in situations when protecting civilians required bold and swift decisions. She also said that States must do more to ensure that violations of international human rights law and humanitarian law were investigated and perpetrators held accountable. The High Commissioner stressed the importance of addressing armed conflicts in which civilians suffered greatly but no peacekeeping operation was deployed. She also referred to the situations in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs expressed regret that, despite extensive norms and standards on human rights and humanitarian law, civilians continued to suffer in conflict situations on a regular basis. She stressed that mandating peacekeeping missions to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence remained among the most significant actions taken by the Council. She emphasized the need for a clear distinction between humanitarian action and the political and military objectives of missions, while ensuring effective coordination between missions and humanitarian actors. The Under-Secretary-

General reiterated the call by the Secretary-General to avoid the use of explosive weapons with wide-area effects in populated areas and pledged to promote recognition by Member States of the humanitarian impact of such weapons. She also referred to the situations in the Central African Republic, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic.

The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations said that while peacekeepers may need to stand up against rogue government elements to protect civilians, peacekeeping could only be viable with the consent of the host Government. He emphasized that the protection of civilians by United Nations peacekeepers should never be confused with non-consensual intervention. The Under-Secretary-General supported accountability for human rights violations and promoted compliance with international human rights law and humanitarian law. He cautioned that exploring new capabilities and adopting new technologies would not be optional in future peacekeeping operations and underlined the crucial need to improve early warning and rapid-reaction capacities.

The Director General of ICRC said that in some current armed conflicts or situations the humanitarian impact of violence against entire populations was overwhelming. He emphasized that the widening gap between humanitarian needs and the ability to deliver effective responses, as well as the decreasing proximity of many humanitarian actors to the people they were trying to help, raised additional hurdles. The Director General further stressed that where the basic needs of affected populations were not met, the parties to a conflict had to allow and facilitate the passage of impartial humanitarian relief. He noted that the ICRC offer of humanitarian services could not be interpreted as a challenge to State sovereignty or recognition of any party to a conflict. He also mentioned internal displacement as one of the most widespread and daunting humanitarian problems.

Members of the Council and many other delegations reiterated their concern that civilians still accounted for the vast majority of the victims of armed conflict. Many delegations stressed the important role of effective peacekeeping and the importance of implementing normative frameworks on the ground. Many Member States emphasized that the protection of civilians was the primary responsibility of States and urged the parties to armed conflicts to observe international humanitarian and human rights law in full. Some delegations stressed that humanitarian aid operations in conflict situations must comply with the United Nations guiding principles for humanitarian assistance. Some delegations called for the combating of impunity for grave violations of international humanitarian and human rights law. Several delegations highlighted the role of the International Criminal Court in combating impunity and deterring violations. Some Member States expressed concern over the destabilizing effect of illicit arms flows and the indiscriminate effect of explosive weapons on civilian populations, and also emphasized the role of the Arms Trade Treaty in preventing and eradicating the illicit trade in conventional arms.

In the presidential statement (S/PRST/2014/3), the Council reaffirmed its commitment to the protection of civilians in armed conflict and to the continuing and full implementation of relevant resolutions and presidential statements. It recalled that States bear the primary responsibility to respect and ensure the human rights of their citizens, as well as all individuals within their territory, as provided by relevant international law, and reaffirmed that the parties to armed conflict bore

the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of affected civilians. It acknowledged the need for the Council to strengthen further the protection of civilians in armed conflict. It reiterated its strong condemnation of all violations of applicable international law and demanded that the parties to armed conflict comply strictly with the obligations under international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law. The Council stressed the need to end impunity and to bring perpetrators to justice. It reiterated the need for strong leadership in peacekeeping operations and recalled its determination to upgrade the strategic oversight of peacekeeping operations, in partnership with troop- and police-contributing countries and other stakeholders. Finally, it recognized the contribution of the updated aide memoire, contained in the annex to the presidential statement, for the consideration of issues pertaining to the protection of civilians and stressed the need for its more systematic and consistent use.

Rule of law

On 19 February, the Council held an open debate on the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Lithuania presided over the debate. Chile was represented at the ministerial level. The Secretary-General briefed the Council, also drawing on issues covered in his report on measuring the effectiveness of the support provided by the United Nations system for the promotion of the rule of law in conflict and post-conflict situations. In addition to members of the Council, under rules 37 and 39 of the provisional rules of procedure of the Council, 51 non-members of the Council, including Latvia at the ministerial level, took part in the open debate.

The Secretary-General stressed that the rule of law was intrinsically linked to peace and security. He noted that strengthening the rule of law was an integral part of the mandates of peacekeeping operations and political missions, which were providing national authorities with wide-ranging support, from constitution-making to strengthening police, justice and corrections institutions. The Secretary-General encouraged members of the Council and other Member States and regional organizations to support the global focal point for police, justice and corrections in the rule of law in post-conflict and other crisis situations. He also stressed that the crafting of peacekeeping and peacebuilding mandates provided a strategic opportunity to support national priorities in this area and highlighted four points, stating that those mandates should reflect the specific challenges of a country and identify priority areas of support, that sequencing or establishing phases for the implementation of the different components of assistance was vital, that a gradual or progressive implementation strategy could be the most effective in transitioning from peacekeeping to long-term development assistance and, finally, that assessing progress was essential to making policy decisions supported by evidence and responsive to particular needs.

Members of the Council and most other delegations reiterated the importance of the rule of law in conflict prevention, peacekeeping, conflict resolution and peacebuilding. In that context, many delegations underscored the role of the United Nations peacekeeping operations and special political missions in providing support to the strengthening of the institutions of the rule of law in host countries. They also elaborated on the preconditions for success of those activities, ranging from the design of mandates to the management of transition, and stressed the importance of

national ownership. Some delegations called for a more consistent commitment by the Council in mandating such support, while other delegations stressed that no single model of the rule of law could be applied to all situations and that it was necessary to adhere to the principles of the Charter. Many delegations also highlighted the importance of achieving a coordinated and coherent approach within the United Nations system and several delegations recognized the efforts made by the Secretariat in that regard. Finally, many delegations referred to the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern and some specifically stressed the need for the Council to improve its cooperation with the International Criminal Court.

On 21 February, the Council adopted a presidential statement on the promotion and strengthening of the rule of law in the maintenance of international peace and security (S/PRST/2014/5), in which it reaffirmed the continued recognition of the need for universal adherence to and implementation of the rule of law, and emphasized the vital importance it attached to promoting justice and the rule of law as an indispensable element for peaceful coexistence and the prevention of armed conflict. Among other things, the Council underlined the importance of supporting the strengthening of the institutions of the rule of law in the host country that is provided, where mandated, by a number of peacekeeping operations and special political missions within the scope of their mandates, working in coordination with relevant United Nations entities. In that regard, various aspects related to activities in the field of the rule of law that may be a part of those mandates were addressed in more detail. The Council also reiterated its concern about the situation of vulnerable groups affected by armed conflict, noted the particular challenges that transnational organized crime, piracy, armed robbery at sea and terrorism might pose and reaffirmed its strong opposition to impunity.

Implementation of the note by the President of the Council on the summary statement of recent practices and newly agreed measures serving as guidance for the work of the Council (S/2010/507)

On 27 February, the Council held a private meeting on the implementation of the note by the President of the Security Council on the summary statement of recent practices and newly agreed measures serving as guidance for the work of the Council (S/2010/507), the wrap-up session for the month of February. Non-members of the Council were invited to participate in the meeting as observers. In total, 69 non-members participated. The President circulated a concept note in advance of the meeting. The aim of the meeting was to hold an exchange of views on the contribution of the Council in February 2014 to the fulfilment of its responsibilities for the maintenance of international peace and security, to encourage assessment of the effectiveness of the Council, to draw lessons and conclusions from the month's activities and to discuss Council priorities in the immediate future.

The main themes drawn out in the discussion were the following:

(a) Most Council members welcomed the unanimous adoption of resolution 2139 (2014) on humanitarian issues in the Syrian Arab Republic and the sense of the commitment of the Council that it sends;

(b) Most members of the Council expressed concern over the situation in the Central African Republic and said there was a need to establish basic security in the country. Some noted the role played by African regional organizations. Many looked

forward to the upcoming report of the Secretary-General and his proposals regarding further engagement by the United Nations;

(c) A number of members of the Council referred to the briefing by the Chairman-in-Office of OSCE and his efforts to address the situation in Ukraine;

(d) A number of members of the Council noted the importance of the thematic debates convened during February, including on the protection of civilians in armed conflicts and the rule of law;

(e) A number of members of the Council stressed that in discharging its responsibilities, the Council had become more active in considering measures under Article 41 of the Charter, such as targeted sanctions, where appropriate;

(f) Some members of the Council noted the need to improve further the working methods of the Council and expressed their appreciation for the work of the Security Council Informal Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions in that regard.